



## 2002 Wetlands Reserve Program

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### Customer Focus:

Mike and Stephanie Becker have enrolled 30 of their 36 acres along Willow Creek in the Wetlands Reserve Program. The wildlife benefits of the WRP project are important to the Beckers, who are avid bird watchers and have recorded at least 137 species of birds in the area. Birds are not the only wildlife in the area. Brown and rainbow trout spawn in their section of Willow Creek, deer are drawn to the lush grass, a moose has been spotted nibbling on their apple trees, and numerous small animals live in the easement area.

"This creek bottom is such a jewel; the WRP easement will protect this land forever," said Mike Becker

## Montana Summary

### Overview

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to restore, enhance, and protect wetlands. Landowners have the option of enrolling eligible lands through permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements.

Montana's landowners have a strong interest in the WRP. In 2002 Montana is servicing applications worth \$1,000,000 on a total of 393.7 acres of land with 237.8 acres of wetlands. The cost to acquire and restore these acres averages \$2,491 per acre.

### Accomplishments

Since 1995 Montana has accepted 103 applications. Montana currently holds contracts with 42 landowners on 18,221.3 acres of lands. Total dollars spent for the period 1995-2002 will exceed \$21,000,000. The average cost to acquire and restore these wetland acres is \$1,160/acre. There is an estimated 7,300 acres of wetlands that are being restored through activities that include ditch and drain plugs, excavation of small wetlands areas, dikes or small levees with water control structures, tree and shrub plantings, native vegetation reseeded, fencing, streambank stabilization and restoration, and wetland and upland management for wetlands related wildlife.

### Program Benefits

Montana has processed 103 applications from interested landowners around the state. This has led to the enrollment of 18,221.3 acres in the program. An estimated 7,300 wetland acres will be restored and managed through WRP. The WRP funds are provided as a direct payment to the landowner. This type of cash infusion can play a big part in the land owner's total economic picture, particularly in times of financial stress. The program is a win-win situation for Montanans as well as the nation's taxpayers. These valuable wetland resources can be restored to natural function, the landowner is given a just compensation and continues as an active partner in the wetland restoration and management effort.

### State Contacts

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## Montana WRP Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2002		Cumulative Total (97-02)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$1,000,000	5	\$21,000,000	45
Total	\$1,000,000	5	\$21,000,000	45

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